

Serial No. 10/538,413

Atty. Doc. No. 2002P84076WOUS

Amendments To The Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1 – 11 (canceled)

12. (previously presented) A brush seal for sealing a gap between a rotor and a stator, comprising:

a brush ring having a multiplicity of sealing bristles, and with at least two annular brush ring carriers extending in the circumferential direction of the rotor, each brush ring being fixed between a first end face of a first brush ring carrier and a second end face of a second brush ring carrier, and the second brush ring carrier being directly fixed axially and radially to the first brush ring carrier,

wherein the second brush ring carrier is fixed to the first brush ring carrier by an unreleasable snap connection.

13. (previously presented) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein a slot is formed between the first brush ring carrier and the second brush ring carrier and the slot receives the brush ring.

14. (currently amended) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein at least one first brush ring carrier has on its first end face a shoulder with a circumferential slot and at least one second brush ring carrier has on its second end face a continuous projection, with a latching nose, and the projection and the latching nose of the second brush ring carrier cooperates with the shoulder and with the circumferential slot of an adjacently arranged first brush ring carrier, wherein the snap connection is formed between the circumferential slot and the latching nose.

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15. (currently amended) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein ~~at least one~~ the second brush ring carrier has on its first end face a shoulder with a circumferential slot ~~and the at least one brush ring carrier has on its second end face a continuous projection, with a latching nose, and the projection and the latching nose of the second end face of the at least one second brush ring carrier cooperates with [[the]] a like-formed shoulder and with [[the]] a like-formed circumferential slot of an adjacently arranged further the first brush ring carrier.~~

16. (previously presented) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein one brush ring carrier is held at least indirectly on the stator.

17. (currently amended) The brush seal as claimed in claim ~~[[12]]~~ 14, comprising a plurality of the brush ring carriers of claim 14 adapted for sequential installation onto a stator, wherein the circumferential slot of one of the plurality of the brush ring carriers is disposed to receive is located in the brush ring carrier mounted first on the stator, and the latching nose is located in the newly pushed on of an adjacently arranged brush ring carrier.

18. (previously presented) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein the brush ring carrier or brush ring carriers have a support plate that extends in the direction of the rotor and the brush rings bear axially against the support plate.

19. (previously presented) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein the brush ring carrier or brush ring carriers have a protective ring.

20. (currently amended) The brush seal as claimed in claim 19, additionally comprising a support plate, wherein at least one of the support plate and [[/or]] the protective ring is or are designed to be radially elastic.

21. (previously presented) The brush seal as claimed in claim 12, wherein the brush seal is designed as a radial seal or axial seal.

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22. (canceled)

23. (new) The brush seal as claimed in claim 14, wherein the circumferential slot is formed disposed toward an outside diameter of the at least one first brush ring carrier.

24. (new) The brush seal as claimed in claim 17, wherein the circumferential slot is formed disposed toward an outside diameter of the at least one first brush ring carrier.